

SC384018

Registered provider: Surecare Residential Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is one of a small group run by a private provider. Registration is for up to four children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The provider operates a school nearby.

The suitably qualified and experienced manager has been registered for this home for over two years.

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 December 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 31 July 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/07/2017	Full	Good
26/07/2016	Full	Good
13/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/06/2015	Full	Good

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home—</p> <p>the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(b))</p>	30/12/2018
<p>When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—</p> <p>if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and</p> <p>to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires.</p> <p>A visit by the independent person to the home may be unannounced.</p> <p>The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether—</p> <p>children are effectively safeguarded; and</p> <p>the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being.</p> <p>The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions. (Regulation 44 (2)(a)(b)(3)(4)(a)(b)(5))</p>	04/02/2019

Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.). However, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
In particular, ensure that the quality of decor is of a consistently high standard and that all of the home's equipment is in good working order.
- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair, and the above principles as set out in 9.35 are respected. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)
In particular, when the manager undertakes a restraint ensure that an independent review of that restraint record is carried out by a senior manager.
- Ensure that staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Record information on individual children in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
In particular, ensure that all documents are clear and accurate and signed when appropriate.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Good planning and transition work prior to the children moving into the home mean that staff can meet the children's needs well. There is effective matching of the children within the group, which minimises the risks of conflict. The children, when possible, meet the staff before they move in. This reduces the children's anxieties about moving to a new home.

The staff have very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of the children. The therapeutic approach to the care and support of the children permeates the home. Consequently, the children's individual needs are the focus of all the support that is provided. The staff consistently seek and act on the children's views. The children feel valued, and they understand why they live at the home and the expectations that the staff have of them. A child said, 'I love it. It's the best place I've been.'

The staff are successful at building trusted and positive relationships with the children

that underpin the success that they have in helping the children to make positive changes in their lives. A child said, 'The staff are lovely. They always have time for me.' A social worker said, 'The patience that [the staff] have is great. I'm really impressed.' The social worker said that the home is brilliant and that the child is the most settled that she has ever been.

On one occasion, the staff were not able to meet the increasingly complex emotional needs of a child. In this situation, the positive relationships enabled the staff to remain important figures in the child's life. The child's social worker said, 'The staff are fantastic. They are really passionate advocates for [the child] and it made all the difference.'

The children are making good progress from their starting points in relation to their health, emotional well-being and personal safety. All of the children are in full-time education. They have good attendance and are making progress in their engagement in education. Some children have moved from being highly resistant non-attenders to discovering the joy of learning. The headteacher said that one child's progress was phenomenal and described how proud the child was of receiving a recent school 'golden award'.

Dirty trainers by the front door, festive decorations and photos give the sense of a well lived-in home, in which the staff and the children have an emotional investment. A family member said, 'It doesn't feel like a kids' home.' The building is generally well maintained and decorated. However, specific areas are showing clear signs of wear and tear, and the oven and some lights require repair.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

The children feel safe and secure. They demonstrated this through their affectionate interactions and strong relationships with staff. The children enjoy the time that they spend with staff and, therefore, risks such as going missing greatly reduce. A family member said, 'This is the place that [the child] has been happiest at. We have seen a massive change and improvement.'

Only suitably trained staff use physical restraint. They do so only when children present a clear risk to themselves or others. The manager reviews all records of incidents of restraint to ensure that its use is fair and proportionate. When the manager has been involved in a restraint, this has been reviewed by another person to provide appropriate reflection. However, this review has been conducted by a member of staff for whom the manager has line management responsibility. This is not appropriate as it may undermine the effectiveness of the review.

The staff use praise, rewards and discussion to promote positive behaviour. This helps the children to understand the impact that their behaviour has on them and others. The home has become a calm environment in which all of the children are better able to talk through their anxieties or concerns with staff. As a result, the children develop greater maturity and understand the importance of boundaries.

Fire prevention arrangements, although generally sound, have specific areas in which improvement is required. Some intumescent strips in the fire doors have been painted over, and two doors do not close fully. This means that smoke, in the event of a fire, has the potential to spread more quickly through the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager and staff have high aspirations for the children and help them to make positive changes. As a result, the children are flourishing. The staff work effectively in partnership with the children and others to help the children reach their potential. A partner professional said, 'I'm really impressed. It's been refreshing having such good communication.'

The staff are well supported and encouraged. The manager ensures that the staff share information effectively and understand the children's needs. The regular team meetings and staff supervision have clear focus. The therapist input into team meetings helps the staff to explore the children's behaviours and understand what the children may be feeling. This enables staff to work in a more knowledgeable and targeted manner.

The manager's open and non-hierarchical approach is valued by staff and children alike. The manager is named by the children as one of the people who they feel able to talk to. The staff support the children in a flexible manner, consistently keeping the children's needs at the forefront of their practice. The staff are well thought of by the children and their families and partner professionals.

The home's records are not always maintained to a high enough standard. Occasionally, this has the potential to affect the quality of guidance for staff and the information on staff deployment and support. For example, children's risk assessments are sometimes inaccurate, staff rotas do not clearly detail the hours worked and, on occasion, staff induction and probation records are not fully completed.

The visits carried out by the independent visitor and the reports of these visits do not give a good sense of the quality of care and support that the children receive. The visitor has, on occasion, informed staff in advance of the visit, and some visits have been undertaken in school hours when no children have been at the home. The visitor has not regularly gained feedback from stakeholders nor have they stated their opinion of the quality of care and effectiveness of safeguarding. This does not provide the objective oversight and reporting that is intended.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC384018

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Surecare Residential Limited

Registered provider address: Spirare Limited, Mey House, Bridport Road, Poundbury, Dorset DT1 3QY

Responsible individual: Emma Barr

Registered manager: Stephen Robertson

Inspector

Joanna Heller: social care inspector

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